

Analysis of Conditions

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Introduction

This section of the **Analysis of Conditions** of the *Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan* presents a summary of the agreements, procedures, and activities the City of Eau Claire uses to coordinate with other units of government, including adjacent towns, villages, and cities, school districts, counties, the State of Wisconsin, and the federal government. The inventory also identifies the major challenges the City faces regarding intergovernmental cooperation and summarizes the major issues to be addressed in the *Intergovernmental Cooperation Element* of the revised *Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan*.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration defines intergovernmental cooperation as “any arrangement by which officials of two or more jurisdictions communicate visions and coordinate plans, policies, and programs to address and resolve issues of mutual interest.” (DOA, **Intergovernmental Cooperation**, p. 4). The Wisconsin state comprehensive planning statutes define the intergovernmental cooperation element of a comprehensive plan as:

“A compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs for joint planning and decision-making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services. The element shall analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental units. The element shall incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local government unit is a party under 66.0301, 66.0307, or 66.0309. The element shall identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph and describe processes to resolve such conflicts.”

Intergovernmental cooperation is important because many local government issues cross-jurisdictional boundaries and affect more than one community. Watersheds, economic conditions, land use, commuter patterns, housing, crime, and effects from growth and change are all issues that spill over municipal boundaries. Increased communication technologies and personal mobility also result in people and resources moving across political boundaries.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Administration, intergovernmental cooperation is frequently an issue within the state simply because of the high number of governmental units. Wisconsin ranks 13th nationally in the total number of governmental units, and 3rd in the number of governmental units per capita. The City of Eau Claire is

located within Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties, and is adjacent to the Towns of Union, Brunswick, Washington, Seymour, and Wheaton, as well as the Village of Lake Hallie and the City of Altoona. The high number of governmental units in metropolitan areas such as Eau Claire often makes effective intergovernmental communication and action more challenging, creates greater potential for conflict among jurisdictions, produces unwanted and wasteful duplication in the delivery of community services, and often results in higher overall government costs for all citizens.

While the Wisconsin comprehensive planning law does not require that the City of Eau Claire cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions, the law does require that the Intergovernmental Cooperation element of Eau Claire's plan include the following:

- Compilation of the objectives, policies, goals, maps, and programs in the comprehensive plan which address joint planning and decision-making with school districts and adjacent local governments for siting and building public facilities and sharing services.
- Analysis of the relationship of the City of Eau Claire to local districts and adjacent local governments, and regional, state, and federal governmental units.
- Inclusion of any cooperative boundary plans or agreements to which the City of Eau Claire is a party under Ch. 66, Wis. Stats.
- Identification of any existing or potential conflicts between the City of Eau Claire and other governmental units, including a description of the process used by the City of Eau Claire to resolve conflicts.

In meeting these requirements, the **Analysis of Conditions and Issues** addresses three broad areas of cooperation:

1. **Shared Services**-the extent of intergovernmental cooperation in delivering general government services through collaboration ranging from informal sharing of information to formal consolidation of governmental units.
2. **Regulations**-the extent of intergovernmental cooperation in creating and administering laws and regulations, especially those regarding land use development, zoning, and construction.
3. **Jurisdictional boundaries**-the extent of intergovernmental cooperation in resolving conflicts about changes in municipal boundaries.

The primary source of data for the analysis of intergovernmental cooperation consists of (1)an inventory of existing agreements, contracts and leases with other units of government and (2)findings and data compiled from a study of intergovernmental collaboration in the Eau Claire metropolitan area completed in May 2003. The inventory is presented as an appendix to this document.

Major Intergovernmental Cooperation Issues

Issues are questions to be discussed, debated, and resolved during the planning process. Major intergovernmental cooperation issues identified through the analysis of conditions include:

1. **Shared Delivery of Government Services:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage more collaboration among local jurisdictions to reduce costs through shared delivery of government services?

The ongoing fiscal challenges confronting local governments as a result of the loss of state shared revenues and the reduction of state government services will compel local governments to restructure and in many cases reduce or eliminate the provision of local services.

2. **Intergovernmental Mistrust:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to strengthen a climate for intergovernmental cooperation and mutual respect that facilitates operational collaboration while acknowledging ongoing disagreement among jurisdictions about fundamental priorities and purposes?

A consistent pattern in the history of intergovernmental relationships in the Eau Claire region has been an undercurrent of mistrust among area governments that occasionally rises to the surface in the form of acrimonious comments by local officials and formal litigation. At times the City has been labeled by adjacent municipalities as being uncooperative, even though the City's extensive number of actual intergovernmental agreements indicates a long history of cooperation with other jurisdictions on a broad range of government services.

3. **Community Buildings and Facilities:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to make more cost-effective public use of existing community buildings and facilities?

The City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Eau Claire School District, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, and the Chippewa Valley Technical College separately maintain numerous buildings and facilities supported by taxpayers. Government jurisdictions in the region, as well as numerous community groups and organizations have an increased need for public meeting room space. In addition, area governments have increased need for access to meeting facilities with current communications technologies.

4. **Community Recreational Facilities:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to improve the coordinated use of existing community recreational facilities to meet growing recreations needs of the community?

The City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Eau Claire School District, and UW-EC own and maintain a wide range of recreational trails, athletic fields, facilities, stadiums, and parks.

5. **US Highway 53, 29, 93 and 12 Growth Areas:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage more effective regional land use planning to guide future growth?

Major highway improvements will soon be completed for US Highways 53, 29, 93 and 12. The Eau Claire metropolitan area will be a regional crossroads for major north-south and east-west highway systems in Wisconsin. Major highway interchanges under construction will generate significant demand for new business land speculation and development.

6. **Assigning Property Addresses:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage a consistent and uniform system of assigning addresses so that both emergency and non-emergency public services can be delivered effectively to all properties?

The City of Eau Claire is located in both Eau Claire and Chippewa Counties. The City assigns street addresses to new construction when a building permit is issued. The City street addresses are assigned based on consistency with existing street addresses and to ensure clarity for emergency vehicle response. The two counties have separate systems of assigning potential addresses to vacant properties outside of the City limits. Making the street addresses consistent both inside and outside the City limits may require either the City to reassign addresses for potentially thousands of properties in the City, or the counties to reassign addresses to rural properties.

7. **Cooperative Community Planning:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage more effective planning coordination among local communities in the metropolitan area?

The state mandated local comprehensive plans are to in place by 2010. Local communities will be preparing and adopting their plans over the next seven years.

8. **Minimizing Urban Sprawl:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to improve intergovernmental cooperation to minimize urban sprawl and reduce long-range government service costs in the metropolitan area?

A major issue confronting the metropolitan area is the increased rate of low-density residential development with lots of 1-5 acres within 5 miles of the current urbanized area. In addition, commercial strip development continues to expand along Highways 53, 93, 12, and 29. In many instances the new development generates additional property tax revenue for the local towns, but also increased

government service costs for the school district, County, and eventually City of Eau Claire.

- 9. Public Transit:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage a more regional or multi-jurisdictional approach to meeting public transit needs?

Transportation demands and patterns in the City of Eau Claire are influenced by multi-faceted demand and capacity issues that are regional in nature. Increased personal vehicle congestion on city streets reflects growth in the regional economy.

- 10. Consistent Land Use Regulation:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage more consistent standards for development codes, land use regulation, and inspection enforcement among local jurisdictions?

Most new residential and business construction in the metropolitan area is directly related to regional economy issues of supply and demand, pricing, and land availability. Construction design and quality, as well as overall development site quality may vary among local jurisdictions because of differences in development standards as well as differences in jurisdictional resources for development code and land use oversight and regulation. Enforcement of standard zoning concepts such as spot zoning may vary from one jurisdiction to another. Overtime, residential and commercial development located adjacent to City boundaries and built according to town standards may be annexed into the City with different and often more rigorous and detailed standards.

- 11. Technology Sharing:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage multi-jurisdictional cooperation in the development of information technology?

In many instances, a key to greater coordination and sharing of resources among jurisdictions and government agencies is the capacity to share information and communicate quickly and reliably.

- 12. Open Space and Environmental Asset Conservation:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage cooperation among local communities to protect key environmental assets such as riverways, woods, scenic areas, and prime farmland?

The Eau Claire area has significant and unique environmental assets that are integral to the quality of life of the area.. In some instances continued development adjacent to or within environmentally significant areas may threaten their preservation. Continued urbanization of the metropolitan region may offer opportunities for implementation of a regional park district to fund and coordinate development and maintenance of park facilities within the area. Development of regional trails and bicycle paths will require coordination among local jurisdictions.

- 13. Boundary Change Litigation:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to address the ongoing costs of boundary-related litigation with adjacent jurisdictions while continuing to implement a consistent and orderly long-range urban growth development plan?

Since the late 1940's, the Eau Claire metropolitan area has experienced a steady pattern of growth in urbanized areas, accompanied by consistent extension of the corporate boundaries of the cities of Eau Claire, Altoona, Chippewa Falls, and most recently the incorporation of the Village of Lake Hallie. The rate of urbanization is anticipated to accelerate with the completion of major highway improvements for Highways 53, 29, 93, and 12. For the City of Eau Claire, the history of perimeter urban growth has often been one of property owners petitioning for annexation, the City accepting petitions consistent with the long-range sewer service area boundaries, the State finding the petition to be in the public interest, the City approving the annexation, and a township government filing suit to contest the annexation.

- 14. Extension of Water and Sanitary Sewer Services:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage the cost-effective extension of water and sanitary sewer facilities within the urban service boundaries established in the Urban Area Sewer Service Plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan?

The City of Eau Claire has long had a policy-(affirmed by a US Supreme Court decision in the 1980's)-of not extending sanitary sewer service without annexation of the property into the city. The City continues to receive requests from adjacent jurisdictions as well as the owners or prospective developers of land adjacent to the City limits for extension of City sewers without annexation.

- 15. Regional Solid Waste and Recycling Facilities and Services:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage cooperation among local governments to ensure cost-effective collection, recycling, and disposal of solid wastes?

Private contractors are responsible for providing sanitation services in the Eau Claire metropolitan area. Eau Claire County administers a recycling program originally funded by the State, but now faced with reduced state support.

- 16. Stormwater and Water Quality:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage intergovernmental coordination in the design and implementation of consistent stormwater management best practices and water quality standards?

It is anticipated that the trend in ever-increasing mandates from the state and federal government concerning stormwater and water quality standards will continue. Major watersheds cross-existing local jurisdiction boundaries. Stormwater runoff for any one drainage basin may be impacted by urban development and construction in two or more jurisdictions. Adjacent jurisdictions often have different standards for stormwater control and management.

17. **Emergency Communications and Preparedness:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to support the continued growth of effective multi-jurisdictional emergency communication services?

The City of Eau Claire and Eau Claire County share in the funding of the Emergency Communications Center, which is located in the Eau Claire County Courthouse, supervised through the Eau Claire Police Department. The Emergency Communications Center processes emergency calls for the City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, and a number of local governments within the county. The increased concern about terrorism has heightened the need for more effective coordination of emergency calls and dispatching.

18. **Economic Development:** What should the City of Eau Claire do to encourage and support the continued economic growth of the metropolitan area?

Eau Claire is the regional center for a northwest Wisconsin market area of over 250,000 people. The continued economic vitality of the metropolitan region is clearly related to the performance of Eau Claire in supporting continued economic growth, attracting financial investment in business and industry, and expanding the overall employment base. Major investment and business expansion in the region will be spurred by the completion of the major improvements to Highway 12, 29, 93, and 53 over the next several years. At the same time the metropolitan area is experiencing major transitions in how to provide economic development services as a result of continuing changes in the nature of the local and global economy, evolving information technologies, and shifting demographic characteristics.

Existing Patterns of Intergovernmental Cooperation

The City of Eau Claire engages in a broad range of intergovernmental cooperative efforts that fall along a continuum of cooperation ranging from simple and informal to complex and formal. Key points along this continuum include:

1. **Exchanging**-Informal exchange of information or knowledge about work issues or operational best practices.
2. **Coordinating**-Ongoing coordination of work activities and work projects to minimize interference with other jurisdictions, resolve mutual work problems, or improve service delivery
3. **Sharing**-Informal or formal agreements to share facilities, equipment, or staff to minimize overall service costs or to improve the quality and timeliness of service delivery

4. **Pooling**-Formal agreements to combine or pool fiscal resources, investments, services, or staff for specific purposes, most often related to purchasing, risk management, insurance, or debt management
5. **Consolidating**-Formal agreements to combine or consolidate two or more programs or services, organizational units, or government jurisdictions into one structure

The actions of any local government within the larger metropolitan region may have a rippling effect on the economic well-being or operational effectiveness of the other governments and communities within the area. At any given time, the City of Eau Claire may be engaged in some form of cooperation as identified above with any of the towns, villages, cities, school districts, or counties in the region, as well as regional, state, or federal agencies. For the purposes of the **Analysis of Conditions** report, the analysis will distinguish between *primary coordination efforts* characterized by more formal and frequent coordination of basic government services with adjacent and overlapping governments, and *secondary coordination efforts* characterized by less frequent coordination of a limited number of services.

Primary Coordination

Figure 1-1 illustrates the geographic relationship of local government jurisdictions within the Eau Claire metropolitan region. The City of Eau Claire's primary coordination efforts involve the following jurisdictions:

- Eau Claire County
- City of Altoona
- City of Chippewa Falls
- Village of Lake Hallie
- Town of Seymour
- Town of Union
- Town of Washington
- Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation-District Six
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development
- University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire
- Chippewa Valley Technical College
- Eau Claire Area School District

Service areas coordinated with the above jurisdictions include: public works, water and sanitary service, stormwater management, police, fire, emergency medical services, park and recreation, transit, health, library, information services, recycling, regional airport, purchasing, and risk management.

Municipalities and Eau Claire County. The City currently has agreements, leases and contracts with Eau Claire County, the City of Altoona, the Village of Lake Hallie, and the Towns of Washington, Union, and Seymour. The City has the greatest number of formal agreements with Eau Claire County, the City of Altoona, and the Town of Washington. The cooperative arrangements with the above jurisdictions include public works, water and sanitary sewer, police, fire, park and recreation, transit, health, library, information management, recycling, municipal airport, purchasing, and risk management. The City coordinates economic development marketing and recruitment with the Eau County Area Economic Development Corporation. The City also contributes annually to the funding of the EDC.

Regional Coordination. At the regional level, the City coordinates with the Eau Claire-Chippewa Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on regional transportation issues and planning. The MPO is staffed by the West Central Regional Planning Commission. The City coordinates economic development marketing with Momentum Chippewa Valley, a three county regional economic development collaboration of communities in Dunn, Chippewa, and Eau Claire Counties. The City also contributes annually to the funding of Momentum Chippewa Valley.

Federal Agencies. A primary federal agency that the City cooperates with is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regarding the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the Home Investments Partnership Program (HOME).

Eau Claire Area School District. The City coordinates with the Eau Claire Area School District to share maintenance and operation of community recreational facilities, parks, and the police liaison program. Formal agreements have been established between the City and the school district for sharing of city parks for school athletic programs and the school gymnasiums for city recreation programs.

Miscellaneous Coordination. The City Fire Department has an agreement to provide Hazardous Materials release level A and B response with Eau Claire and Chippewa County. The City also has agreements with Chippewa Valley Technical College for the shared use of classrooms and a campus fire station and training facility and with UW-Eau Claire for cooperative activities involving maintenance and use of university athletic fields for city recreation programs and joint planning for the preservation of the Putnam Park land reservation area located on and adjacent to the UW-EC campus, as well as coordination and planning for the university use of the City's public transit system.

Secondary Coordination

The City of Eau Claire's secondary coordination efforts involve the following jurisdictions:

- Chippewa County
- City of Augusta
- Village of Fall Creek
- Village of Fairchild

- Towns of Bridge Creek, Brunswick, Clear Creek, Drammen, Fairchild, Lincoln, Ludington, Otter Creek, and Pleasant Valley in Eau Claire County
- West Central Regional Planning Commission
- Wisconsin State Agencies, including Administration, Attorney General's Office, Commerce, Legislature, and Governor's Office
- FEMA
- US Department of Justice
- US Department of Commerce-Bureau of Census

Service areas coordinated with the above agencies include planning, plat review, parcel addresses, tax levies, grant funding, economic development and marketing, criminal justice, census planning, and statute revisions.

Other Municipalities and Chippewa County. A northern portion of the City of Eau Claire is located within Chippewa County. The City coordinates with Chippewa County on an ongoing basis concerning the apportionment of tax levies, the review of plats, and the assigning of parcel addresses. The City also occasionally works with other local governments within Eau Claire County and Chippewa County regarding economic development and matters of mutual concern to communities within the broader metropolitan region.

Federal Agencies. The City coordinates with federal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on flood protection, permitting, and riverfront. The City also coordinates with the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census on the administration of the Decennial Census as well as with the Economic Development Administration on economic restructuring issues. The City coordinates with the Department of Transportation regarding highway design and funding and with the Department of Justice regarding grant funding for police programs and youth at-risk programs.

State Agencies. The City coordinates with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Revenue, the Department of Administration, Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection, State Legislators and the Governors Office. As noted above, the City coordinates with the Department of Transportation for transit and airport issues and funding. Funding for local streets and highways and public works is provided by the State through several programs including state shared revenues, the Local Road Improvement Program and federal funding programs administered by the State. The City's main coordination issues with the Department of Natural Resources include flood plain regulation, stormwater runoff, erosion control, sanitary sewer planning, wetland regulation, potable water delivery and protection, and brownfield remediation and redevelopment. The City coordinates with the Department of Commerce for economic development programs such as loans, grants, and programs for local businesses. The Wisconsin Department of Administration reviews all annexations proposed by property owners and the City provides background information on each annexation. The City coordinates with the Wisconsin Department of Revenue on the creation of Tax

Incremental Finance Districts, property assessments and municipal finance. For subdivision plat review, the City coordinates with the Wisconsin Department of Administration. The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection coordinates Exclusive Agriculture/Farmland Preservation program.

Regional Agencies The City works closely with the West Central Regional Planning Commission regarding annual transportation and economic development project priorities, demographic information and analysis, and mapping. The City also coordinates, primarily through the City Housing Authority and the City's CDBG program with the Western Dairyland Community Action Program.

Miscellaneous Coordination. The City coordinates with Excel Energy, Ameritech, and Charter Communications for the provision of gas, electric, telephone and cable TV services. Coordination is primarily through the subdivision platting process or in the case of cable TV, through franchise agreements.

Prior Planning Regarding Intergovernmental Cooperation

Since 1990, the City of Eau Claire has participated in the preparation of three major community or regional plans addressing significant issues in intergovernmental cooperation. These plans include the **1993 Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan**, the **Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Sewer Service Plan for 2010**, and the **Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Area Long Range Highway Element**. The City of Eau Claire prepared the first, while the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission prepared the latter two plans..

1993 Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan

The existing Eau Claire comprehensive plan was adopted in 1993, replacing a series of single-topic plans adopted in the early 1980's. The major issues and elements of the 1993 plan are summarized previously in Chapter 3-“Land Use and Growth Management Analysis” on pages 5-11 of this **Analysis of Conditions and Issues**. Goals and need identified in the 1993 plan included: creating a fiscally-responsible development pattern; ensuring orderly planned development of new areas in and adjacent to the city; and improving the coordination of inter-jurisdictional land use planning. Major policies included:

- The City will encourage the surrounding towns and the counties to adopt and follow land use plans and zoning regulations maintain a very-low density pattern of development in the rural areas supportive of farmland preservation (where soils are appropriate), town fiscal health, maintenance of rural beauty and the avoidance of long-term conflicts with outward municipal urban growth.
- The City will incorporate the Urban Sewer Service Boundary of the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission into the City's plan.

- The City will guide future growth within a defined Urban Service Area in an efficient and orderly manner so as to promote contiguous and compact development.

As noted previously in Chapter 3 (page 3-5), the 1993 City plan greatly improved the City's practices and policies for growth management and was incorporated into the City's budgeting and capital planning processes. However, in retrospect, the 1993 plan did not take a sufficiently strong leadership position on land use and zoning just outside the City's boundaries, resulting over the past 10 years in a proliferation of unsewered residential lots inhibiting compact, cost-efficient urban growth.

Urban Sewer Service Plan for 2010

The *Chippewa Falls-Eau Claire Urban Sewer Service Plan for 2010* was prepared in 1990 by the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to meet environmental and land use planning requirements of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The plan projects future needs for sanitary sewer service within the metropolitan area, identifies sensitive environmental areas, and defines the procedures for reviewing boundary and plan amendments to the sewer service plan. The sanitary sewer service boundary established in the *Urban Service Plan* was incorporated into the 1993 Eau Claire comprehensive plan as the boundary between the urban service area and the rural area.

Long-Range Transportation Plan

The West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission also prepared the *Long-Range Transportation Plan for the Chippewa Falls- Eau Claire Metropolitan Planning Area*, which provides a coordinated set of recommendations for transportation improvements for the 114 square mile metropolitan area. The long-range plan provides recommendations and cost estimates for improvements for US Highways, State Trunk Highways, and County Trunk Highways. The most recent update of the plan was completed in 1997 and included recommendations for an interchange at I-94 and Cameron Street in the Town of Union, expansion of STH 93 to four lanes south of Eau Claire in the Town of Washington, and completion of US Highway 29 improvements in the Village of Lake Hallie north of Eau Claire.

Plans of Adjacent Communities

The Cities of Altoona and Chippewa Falls, the Village of Lake Hallie, and the Towns of Seymour, Washington, Brunswick, Union, Pleasant Valley, and Wheaton have completed some degree of future land use planning for their jurisdictions. Their efforts are summarized in Chapter 3, pages 20-28. The Chippewa Falls plan anticipates major commercial and industrial growth near the interchange of Highways 53 and 29, and a continuation of the residential developments to the south and west of Chippewa Falls. Altoona projects steady growth on its east and southeast sides, primarily from

annexations from the Town of Washington. Altoona's plan recommends very low-density development of one or two houses per 40 acres in the town area projected for eventual incorporation into the city. Lake Hallie projects major industrial and commercial growth at the interchanges within its boundaries. The town plans generally call for a continuation of residential development density patterns of 1.5 minimum acres, with average lot sizes being somewhat larger (3 acres).

Summary

As noted in Chapter 3, page 3-20, the village and town plans for the jurisdictions adjacent to the City of Eau Claire allow large lot residential development without public sewer or water service. Many of these lots are located within three miles of the City of Eau Claire. The town and village lots are generally too large to be economically served with public sewer and water lines, but too small to be easily resubdivided into urban-sized lots. Chapter 3 finds that:

“This practice of very-large-lot housing is potentially very damaging for the City of Eau Claire, the county and the metropolitan region. The negative effects are already being seen.

- A wall is being formed around the City that is choking off the outward extension of public utilities, increasing the cost of housing and infrastructure, pushing urban growth to less efficient locations, and causing further semi-rural platting.
- The County and metropolitan area will become less competitive for new housing and jobs as costs rise and efficiencies are lost.
- Rural roads are becoming overburdened with traffic.
- Water quality may be degraded by surface runoff and, potentially, septic tank effluent.
- Farmland is being lost.
- Rural character is being lost.
- Service costs and property tax rates will rise sharply as the Towns become caught between the low service and low demand rural environment and the high service-high tax base urban environment.

Thus the major issue confronting the City of Eau Claire in this Comprehensive plan is how to gain agreement from the adjacent towns and village to plan and regulate for compact, efficient urban growth.” (p. 3-20).

Intergovernmental Cooperation Analysis

Wisconsin statutes provide for three levels of general-purpose government at the local level: counties, cities and villages, and towns. Given the multiplicity of jurisdictions in the state, the state's cumbersome and reactive annexation laws, and the rate of projected economic and population growth, conflict among the different levels of local government

and among adjacent jurisdictions is inherent in the system. Local government exists to provide necessary and desirable services to protect and enhance the public health, safety, and general welfare. In Wisconsin, local governments have been compelled to rely increasingly on the general property tax levy to fund the provision of basic local government services. Dramatic reductions in the traditional state shared revenue program have only increase the local government reliance on the property tax.

In growth areas such as the Eau Claire metropolitan region, the expanding population has generated a steady increased demand for more housing, community facilities, roads, and a broad range of urban services. Typically, property owners and developers have sought annexation to the City of Eau Claire in order to obtain City sanitary and water extensions, and to facilitate optimal development of vacant land. Often, towns have viewed annexations as reductions in the tax base and financial capacity of the town to continue to provide traditional town services to remaining residents. Cities and villages in the metro area have tended to view annexations as providing for the logical development of perimeter areas with more cost-efficient use of the land. For most towns, cities, and villages, the dynamics of growth, annexation, and boundary change have been viewed from a win-lose perspective, making conflict about boundary change decisions almost inevitable.

This section analyzes the effectiveness of existing intergovernmental cooperation strategies, identifies existing strategies for resolving intergovernmental conflicts regarding boundary changes, and examines opportunities for improving intergovernmental coordination in the future. The review will discuss the extent of intergovernmental cooperation in four areas:

- Communication and Planning Coordination
- Shared Services and Resources
- Land Use Regulation and Enforcement
- Boundary Change

Communication and Planning Coordination

Most government jurisdictions in the Eau Claire metropolitan region communicate with each other at least on a project by project basis. For example, the City of Eau Claire, the Eau Claire Area School District, and the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire have worked cooperatively to fund and maintain selected community recreational facilities, such as Carson Park football field and University owned sports fields in Eau Claire. Eau Claire County and the City of Eau Claire exchange meeting agendas for the County Board, City Council, and Plan Commission meetings. A much broader range of informal communication about common concerns takes place among the professional staff of the jurisdictions with full-time staff.

The City of Eau Claire provides formal notification to adjacent jurisdictions as required by state statute. Notice of petitions for annexation and scheduled public meetings, for example, are mailed to the town clerk in accordance with statutory requirements.

The City of Eau Claire has also provided information and draft copies of plan reports to adjacent jurisdictions regarding the preparation of the City's comprehensive plan. During the preparation of the 1993 comprehensive plan, draft copies of the plan were provided to Eau Claire County and to adjacent towns. City planning staff also made presentations about the City's plan when requested by community groups and town boards or planning committees. The focus of the communication activities for the 1993 plan was on notifying and informing other jurisdictions about the City's planning goals and policies.

Shared Services and Resources

In 2002 the City of Eau Claire and six other local jurisdictions-Eau Claire County, Chippewa County, City of Chippewa Falls, City of Altoona, Town of Washington, and the Eau Claire Area School District jointly funded a study of the local opportunities for sharing government services. The findings and recommendations of the study are contained in the final report, **"Shared Services in the Chippewa Valley: Exploring Opportunities for Intergovernmental Collaboration"**. The report concluded that numerous services and facilities were already being shared among local governments, but that an ongoing work committee should be established to continue collaboration efforts. In 2003 the participating jurisdictions formed a Shared Services Steering Committee as well as a Chippewa Valley Group Purchasing Cooperative. The Steering Committee has convened preliminary discussions about sharing park equipment, information services, and property assessment. A partial listing of existing collaborative efforts are listed in Appendix A.

Land Use Regulation and Enforcement

Within the metropolitan region, land use regulation and enforcement varies among the government jurisdictions. The City of Eau Claire has full-time planners and inspectors who inspect and enforce the City's zoning, building, and development codes. Eau Claire County also has fulltime planning and inspection staff to enforce County codes. The joint City-County Health Department inspects water and septic facilities in the County and enforces a range of housing and sanitary codes throughout Eau Claire County, including within the City of Eau Claire. Similarly, Chippewa County and the City of Chippewa Falls provide fulltime zoning and inspection staff for their jurisdictions. Most of the towns adjacent to the City of Eau Claire rely on Eau Claire County for building inspections and land use and zoning enforcement.

By and large the existing zoning and land use regulations of the various jurisdictions reflect the dominant land use patterns associated with each jurisdiction. The county and town regulations emphasize a need for farmland preservation and tend to allow for a wider range of uses within residential zoning districts. Public infrastructure requirements for new development in the towns, including areas within the City of Eau Claire's projected urban service area, do not require curb and gutter, sidewalks, city standard streets (3" asphalt plus 6" gravel/rock base). In addition, the County and towns have not

adopted the uniform one and two family dwelling building codes used by the City for new residential development.

Boundary Change

The most frequent topic of debate and conflict among local government jurisdictions is the expansion of city boundaries. By definition, the expansion of the corporate area of the City of Eau Claire means a reduction in the area of one or more of the adjacent towns. This section will review the current boundary change process through annexation and the extent of existing boundary agreements and conflict resolution procedures.

Annexation. Expansion of the Eau Claire city boundaries occurs as a result of petitions from property owners for annexation of their land into the city. The annexation process is established by state statute. Land petitioned for direct annexation generally must meet the following requirements:

1. The territory proposed for annexation must be contiguous to the City of Eau Claire and cannot lie within another city or village.
2. The annexation of the subject property cannot result in the creation of an island of territory not part of the City of Eau Claire.
3. More than 50% of the owners of the land and 50% of the electors residing within the territory are willing to sign the annexation petition.
4. The proposed annexation is in compliance with the urban service boundaries of the Eau Claire Comprehensive Plan.

The typical annexation process includes the following steps:

1. Applicant submits an accurate legal description to the City, which prepares a petition of annexation and a scaled map of the proposed annexation area.
2. The applicant picks up the petition and map and obtains the required signatures on the petition and files it with the City Clerk.
3. Two copies of the filed petition are returned to the applicant who is responsible for mailing by registered mail one copy to the clerk of the affected town and one copy to the Wisconsin Department of Administration.
4. The State has a 20-day period after receiving the petition to issue an advisory comment on the impact of the annexation on the public interest.
5. The City Attorney's Office prepares an annexation ordinance and public meetings for consideration of the ordinance are scheduled with the City Plan Commission and City Council.
6. The City Council acts on whether to approve the ordinance and accept the annexation of land. A 2/3 of all members of the City Council is required to approve the ordinance.
7. Once the ordinance is adopted and published, the property described is annexed and given the temporary City zoning indicated in the ordinance.

Boundary Agreements and Conflict Resolution. Local jurisdictions in the Eau Claire metropolitan region have not entered into any boundary agreements under Wisconsin Statutes 66.023 or 66.30 regarding changes to municipal boundaries. The City of Eau Claire has entered into agreement with the City of Altoona to establish the extra-territorial plat review boundaries for each jurisdiction.

All of the boundary changes for the City of Eau Claire over the past 40-50 years have been accomplished through annexation. Many of these changes have been accompanied by opposition from towns, often involving litigation by towns to oppose annexations or to oppose the City's use of public rights of way located in the towns. The City's established policy is to not extend City sanitary service without annexation into the City. Historically, property owners of land adjacent to the City have petitioned for annexation in order to connect to the City's sanitary system, and develop land at more cost-efficient urban densities. Conflicts between the City and adjacent towns about annexations have been resolved through the procedures provided in state statute. In some instances, towns have not pursued formal opposition to the requested annexation. In other instances, the City Council has rejected the petitions. In still others, the towns have pursued litigation through district and appellate courts. In all instances, the question of annexation and specific conflict between the City and a town has been resolved according to the procedures and processes provided for under state statute.

Historically, the presence of an annexation dispute between the City and an adjacent town has not impeded the cooperation or coordination of the two jurisdictions on other government services or issues. Annexation is a legal process defined by statute, and local jurisdictions have used the existing statutory procedures to conduct the process and resolve any disagreements between jurisdictions about the outcome.

Future Boundary Change

Provided below is a table illustrating the changes in population and land area for the City of Eau Claire from 1960 to 2000.

Population per Acre 1960-2000 (City of Eau Claire)

Year	Population	Area in Sq. Miles	Area in Acres	People Per Acre
1960	37987	19.27	12332.8	3.08
1970	44619	21.3	13632	3.27
1980	51509	27.47	17580.8	2.93
1990	56856	30.16	19302.4	2.94
2000	61704	32.43	20755.2	2.97

The average ratio of population per acre for the past five decennial years is 3.04 persons per acre. Using this average ratio, the increase in the City's area can be projected over the next twenty years, based on the projected population. These projections are shown below:

Projected Increase in Land Area for City of Eau Claire

Year	Projected Population	People Per Acre	Area in Acres	Area in Sq. Miles	Increase from 2000
2010	67100	3.04	22072	34.49	2.03 sq. miles
2020	73000	3.04	24013	37.52	5.06 sq. miles
2025	76000	3.04	25000	39.06	6.6 sq. miles

From 1980 to 2000, the population of the City of Eau Claire increased from 51,509 to 61,704. The area of the city increased from 27.47 square miles to 32.43 square miles as a result of petitions for and approval annexations from adjacent towns. The City of Eau Claire population is projected to increase to 76,000 by the year 2025-a rate of growth comparable to what occurred the past 30 years. Assuming that the gross ratio of population to area would be similar to what has occurred since 1960, that is, a ratio of 3.04 persons per acre, the projected population increase for 2025 would be accompanied by an expansion of the Eau Claire corporate boundaries of 6 to 7 square miles.

This projection of increased area is clearly only a rough measure, although it does indicate the possible, even probable, magnitude of boundary change and urbanization anticipated over the next twenty years. Historically, this degree of boundary adjustment has been accompanied by political and legal disagreements between the City and adjacent towns. But history also suggests that such disagreements will eventually be resolved, and the area of the City will be increased by 6-7 additional square miles.

The issue confronting the metropolitan region is perhaps less one of how to avoid or how to resolve conflict, and more one of how to ensure that future development of the region will occur in the most logical and cost-effective pattern possible, and at the least overall long term cost to the taxpayers of the region. The issue then is not how to avoid conflict, but how to resolve conflict about boundary change, and perhaps the underlying conflict between differing visions about urban growth, in a way that provides a coherent, overall regional growth strategy that accommodates future economic and population growth, yet protects important environmental and rural assets. The continued economic vitality of the metropolitan region is directly linked to the economic vitality and health of Eau Claire as the largest city in the region. Significant growth is going to occur over the next twenty years in the region. Where growth will locate, how it will be served, and who will pay for the increased costs in necessary public services are issues of concern for every citizen and taxpayer in the region.

Appendix A

Examples of Existing Collaborative Efforts in Chippewa Valley Area

- Eau Claire County Animal Shelter contract with City of Eau Claire
- Eau Claire County Brush Disposal Site agreement with Eau Claire Parks Division, Street Department and Housing authority.
- UWEC and City of Eau Claire cooperation - development of Bollinger Athletic Field Complex
- City of Eau Claire/CVTC Joint Fire Station/Training Facility
- City of Eau Claire HAZMAT agreements with Eau Claire County and the state
- City of Eau Claire and counties of Eau Claire and Chippewa agreements for election services
- City of Eau Claire agreement with Eau Claire School District for investment and treasury services
- Eau Claire County - Countywide Fire Department Mutual Aid agreements
- Chippewa Valley Region Emergency Medical Services agreements and paramedic intercept coverage
- Eau Claire City/County(wide) mass casualty response capability
- MEG Drug Enforcement Unit of Western Wisconsin
- Cities of Altoona and Eau Claire – Local Road Improvement Program
- Eau Claire County-City of Eau Claire Joint Communication Center
- Eau Claire County-City of Eau Claire City/County Health Department
- Altoona-City of Eau Claire contract for sewer services
- Altoona-City of Eau Claire bus service and paratransit contracts
- Eau Claire-Eau Claire County paratransit contract
- Eau Claire-UWEC bus service contract
- Eau Claire County-wide Library Services – Eau Claire Public Library, City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Altoona, Augusta, and Fall Creek
- Shared Automated Library System - Eau Claire Public Library, Indianhead Federated Library System, CVTC, Altoona, River Falls, Hudson, New Richmond, Baldwin, Somerset, Glenwood City, Woodville and Deer Park.

- Eau Claire-Eau Claire County fingerprinting contract
- Eau Claire County joint tax billing
- Chippewa County joint tax billing
- Eau Claire County tax roll data base sharing
- Eau Claire-Eau Claire County agreement to share purchasing agent
- Eau Claire-Eau Claire County joint support for Senior Central
- Eau Claire city-school district police liaison program
- Eau Claire County Highway Department contracts
 - Seal Coating for City of Eau Claire
 - Drug and alcohol training program for CDL holders provided by department to contracted towns, cities and villages
 - Town of Union highway maintenance contract
 - Agreement with state to maintain all state highways in Eau Claire County
- Eau Claire County Highway Department informal cooperative efforts with other agencies
 - Ice control and sand storage at the Drammen town shop
 - Truck rentals for road paving projects from other departments, townships or counties, especially Town of Bridger Creek and Town of Washington
 - Special equipment rental to and from Towns or other counties
 - Source of materials for Cities and Towns
- Joint process for DNR Storm Water Discharge Permit
- Road Improvement Program – Regional Tourism Services – Funding for Chippewa valley Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Joint Road Maintenance Agreements for snow plowing – City of Eau Claire, Towns of Seymour, Town of Hallie (now Village of Lake Hallie), City of Altoona, Eau Claire County
- Chippewa River Trail – City of Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, Hallie and Cornell
- Swimming Lessons – City of Eau Claire and Town of Seymour
- Joint funding for PACT
- Joint funding for Eau Claire Area Industrial Development Corporation

- Chippewa Valley Innovation Center (City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County, Chippewa County, UW-EC, CVTC, Industrial Development Corporation and Northern States Power)